EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN

International Centre for Ethics
in the Sciences and Humanities (IZEW)

Revisiting *Spheres of Justice*

“Security” as a social good

Security, Ethics, and Justice (Tübingen, June 22, 2012), Dr. Michael Nagenborg

Part One

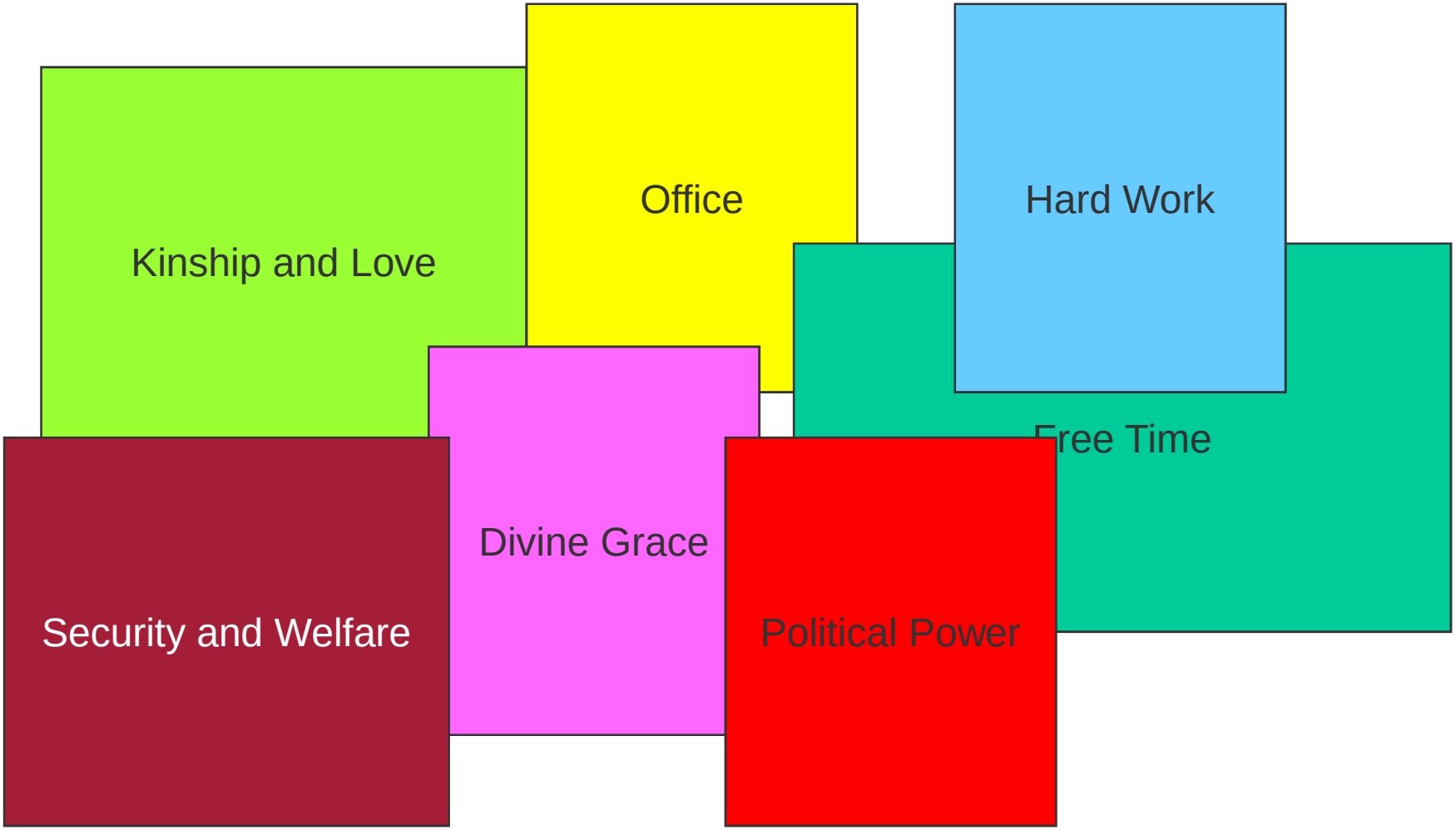
WHY REVISTING *SPHERES OF JUSTICE*?

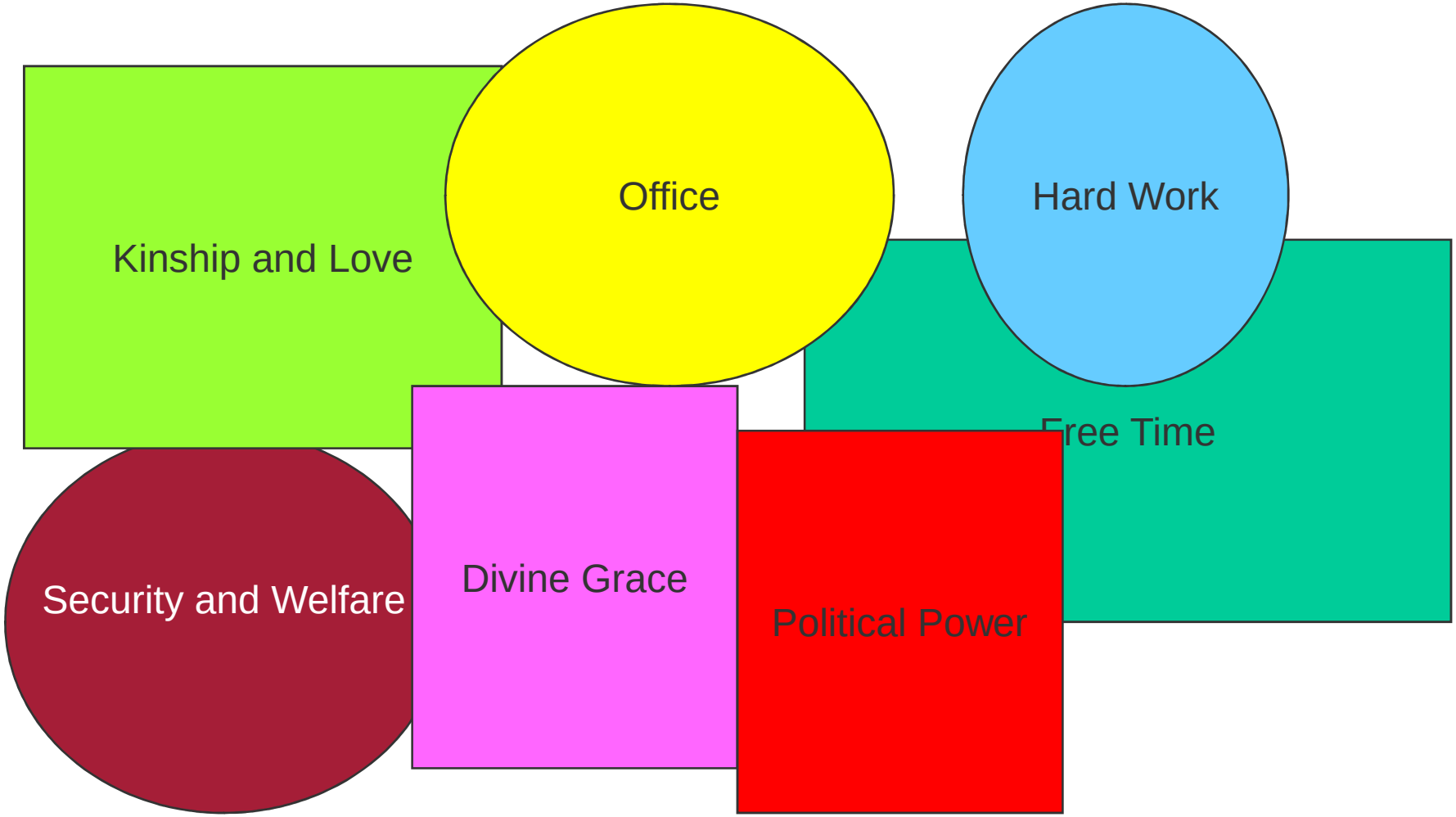
© 2012 Universität Tübingen

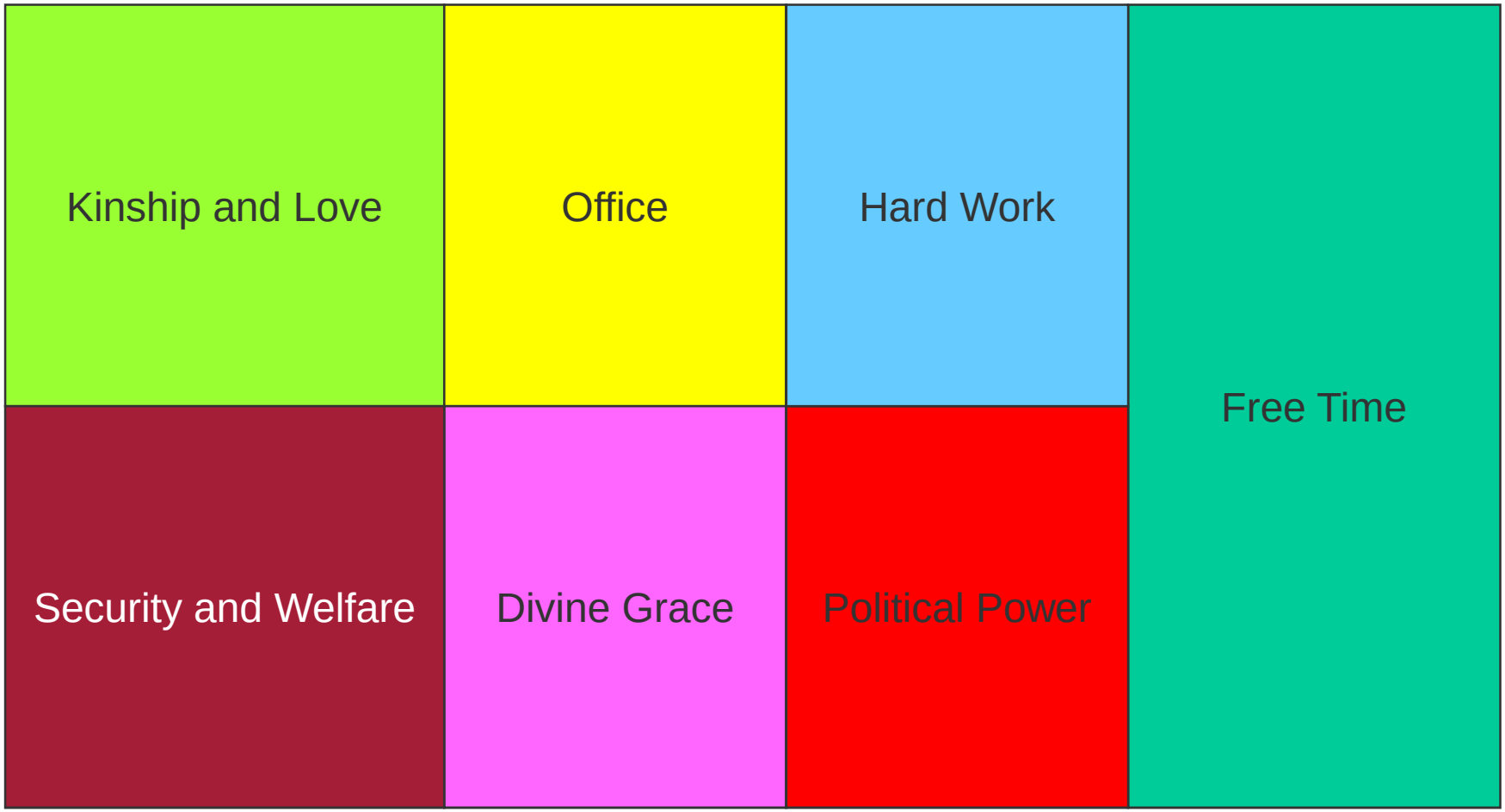
Privacy as contextual integrity

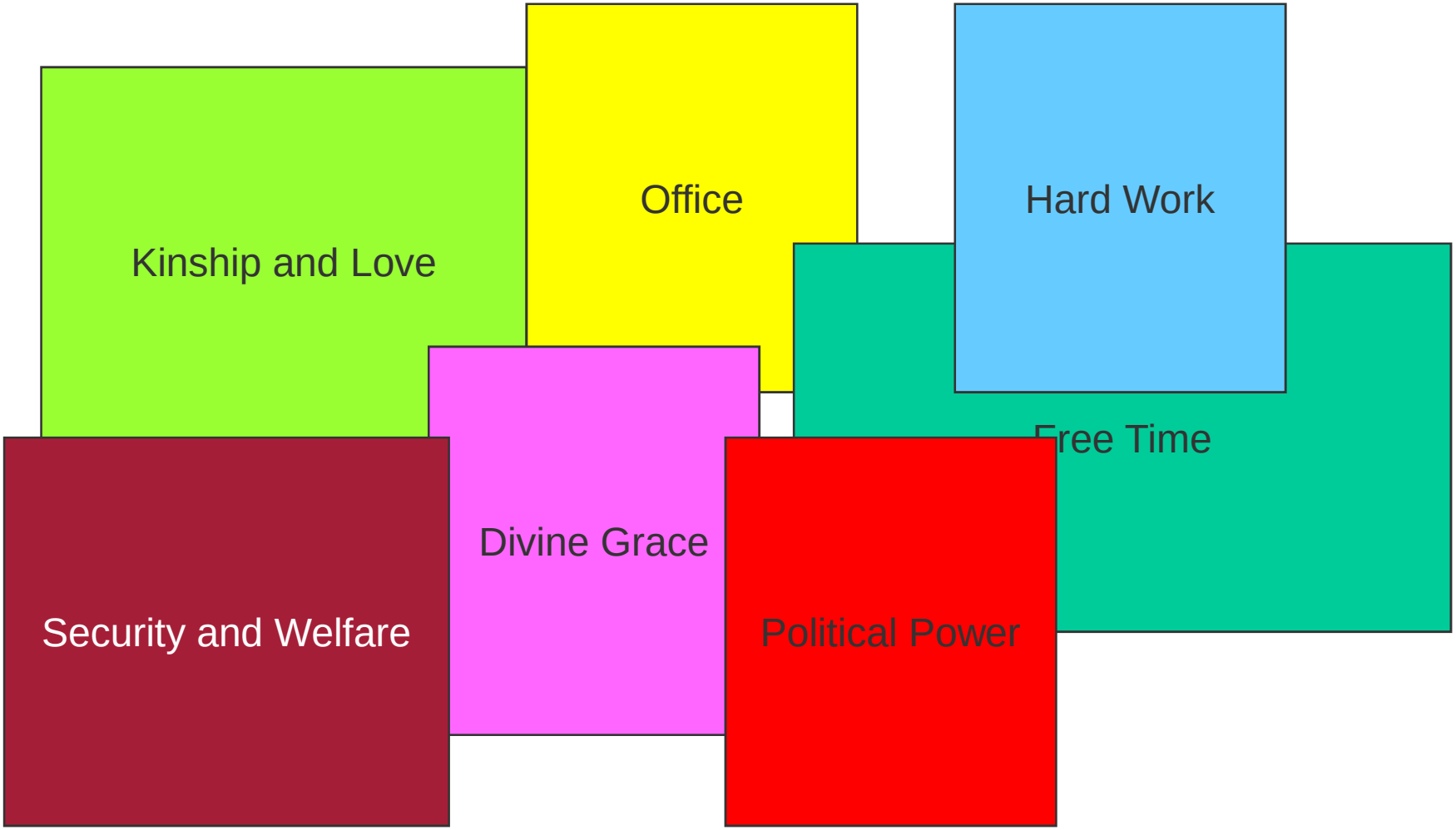
- Nissenbaum (2009)
  - Nissenbaum (2004)
  - Van den Hoven (1999)

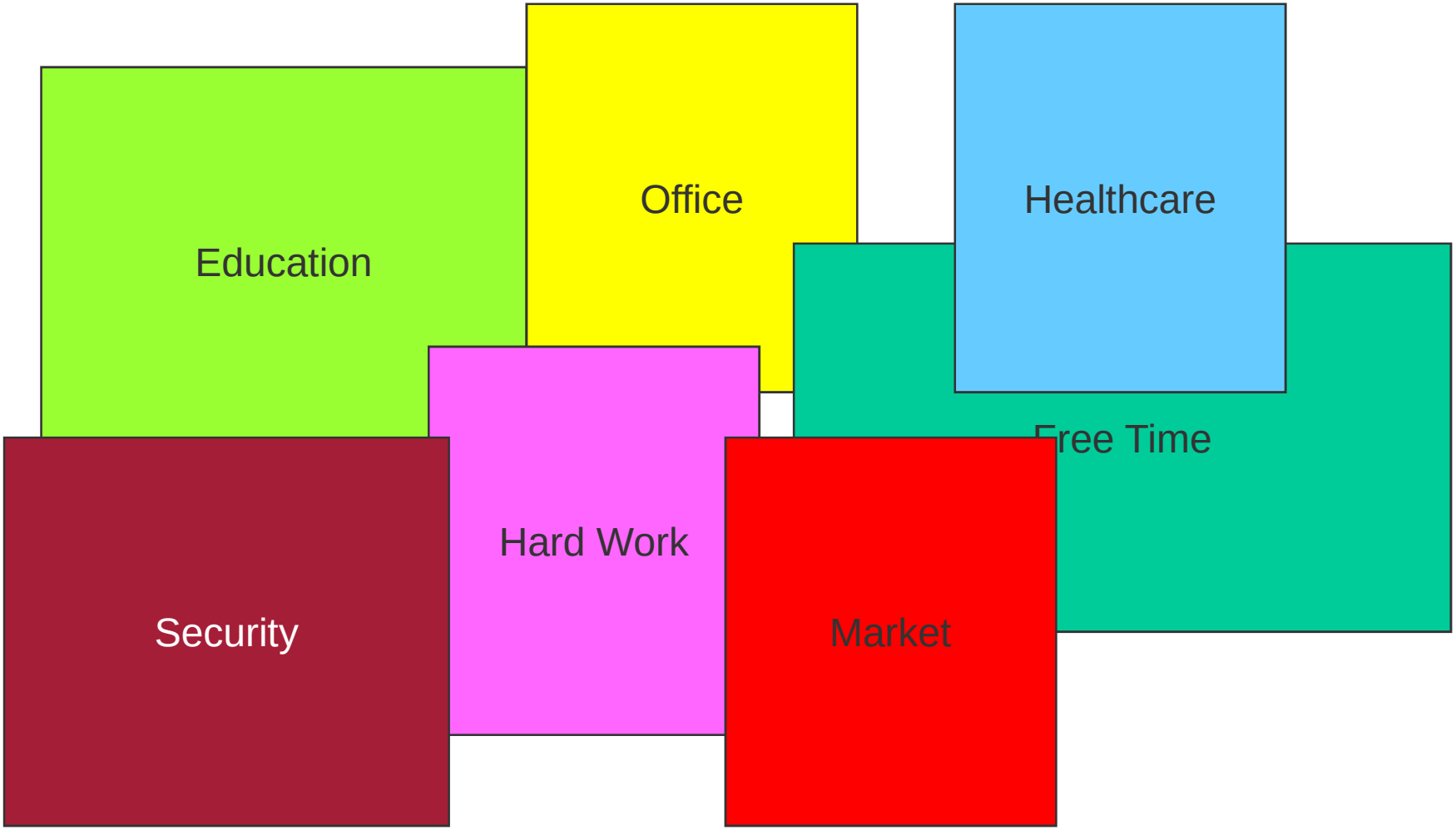
© 2012 Universität Tübingen

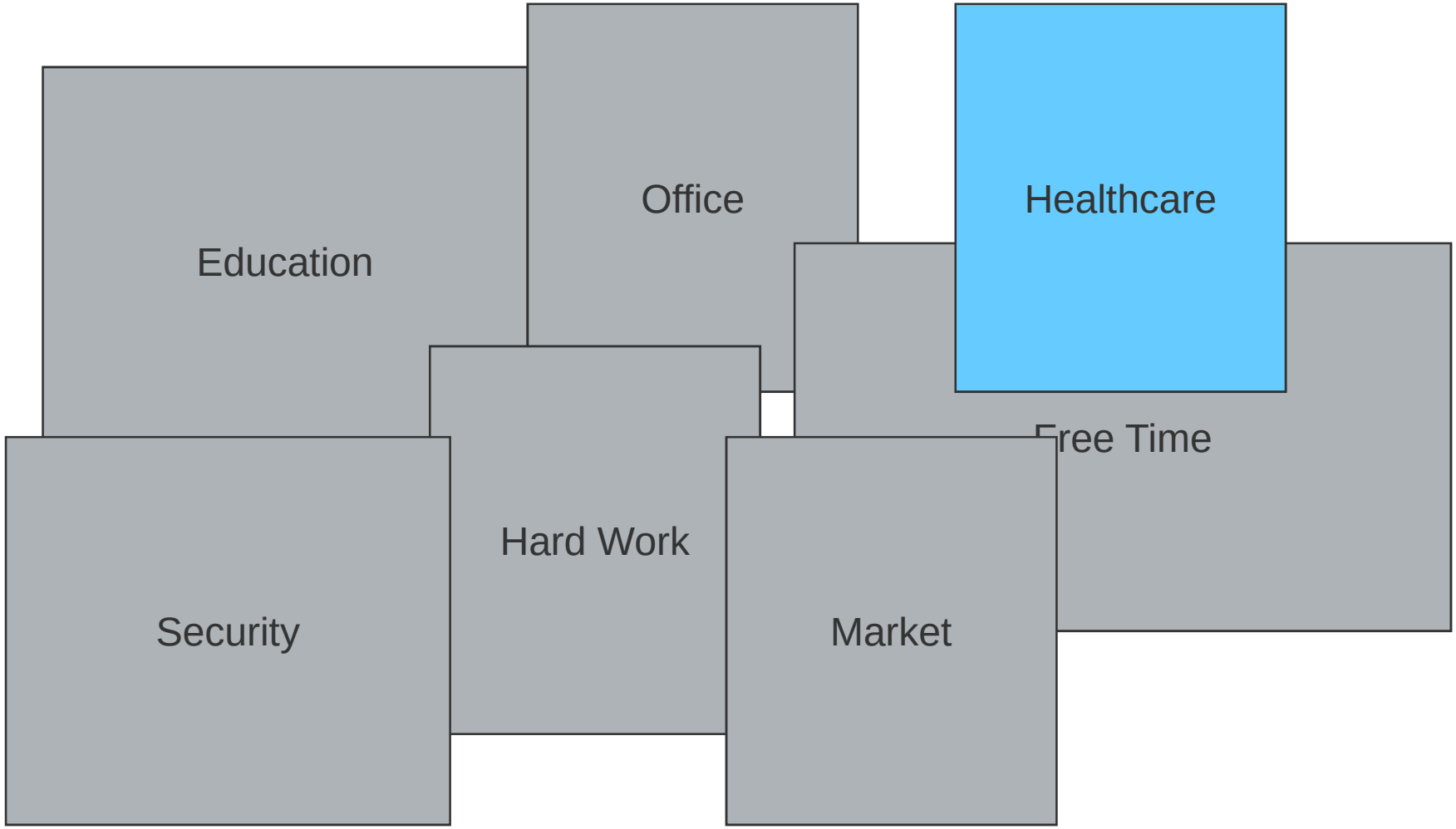

Kinship and Love
Office
Hard Work
Free Time
Divine Grace
Security and Welfare
Political Power

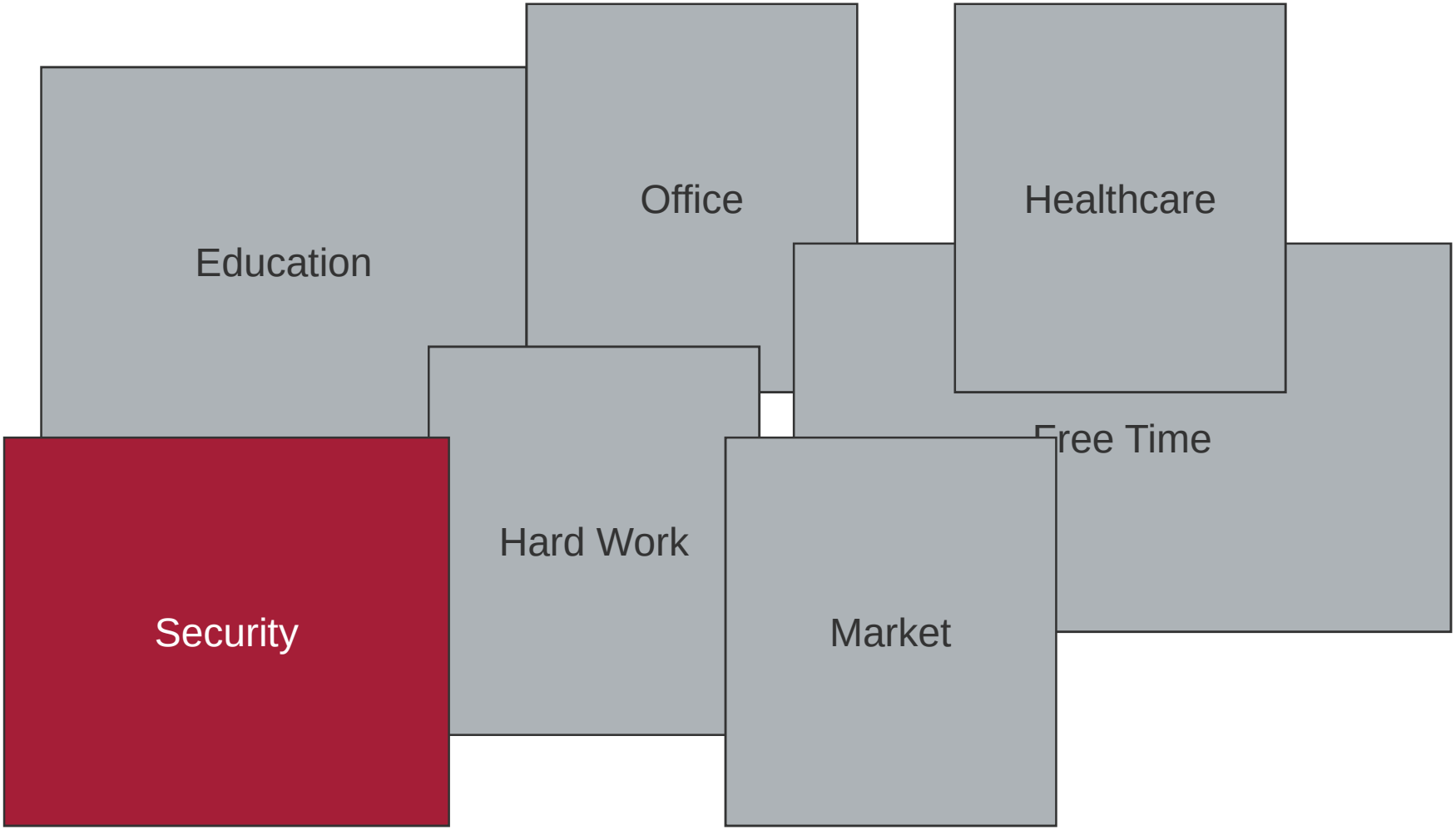

Kinship and Love
Office
Hard Work
Free Time
Security and Welfare
Divine Grace
Political Power

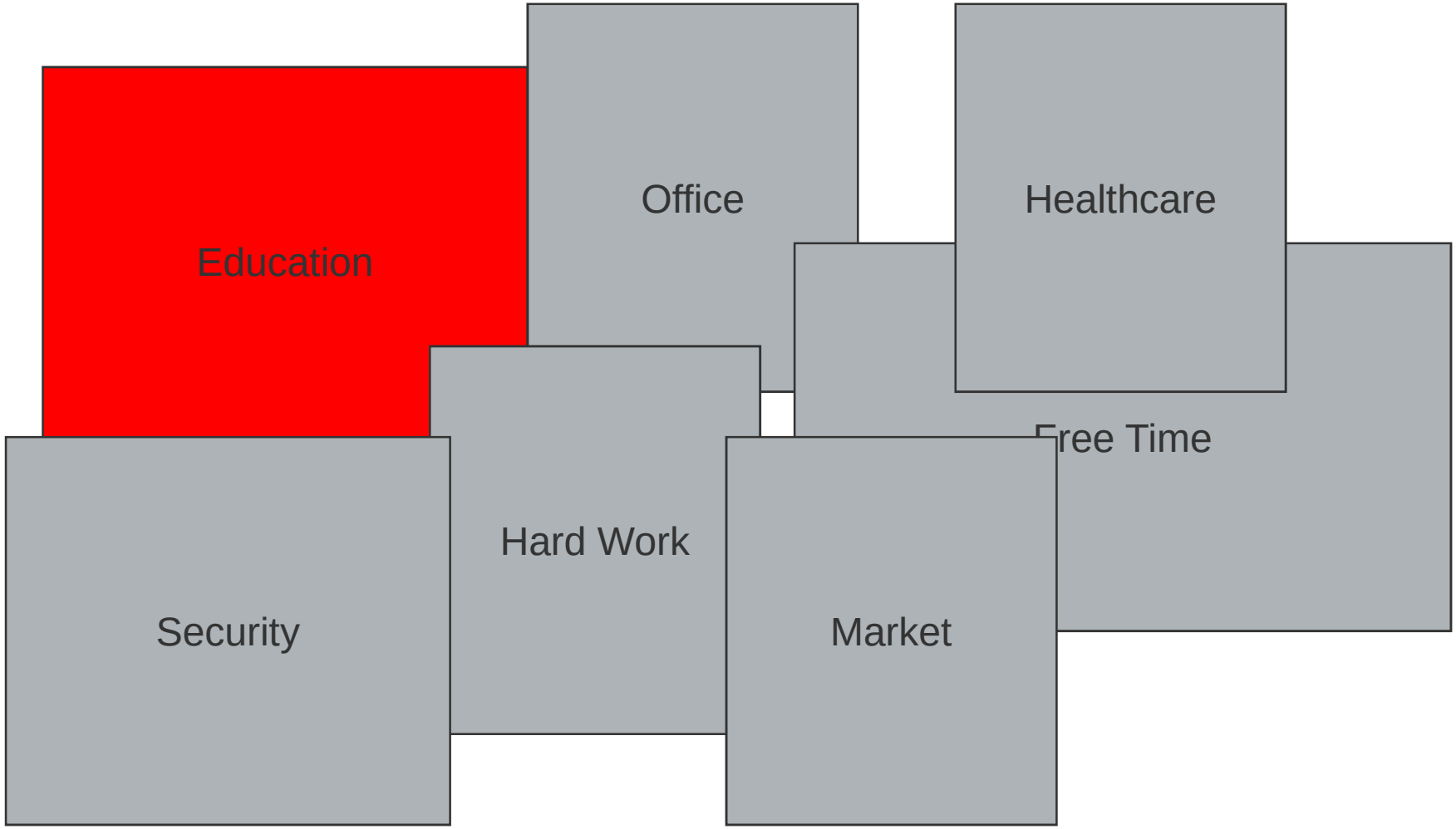

Kinship and Love
Office
Hard Work
Free Time
Security and Welfare
Divine Grace
Political Power

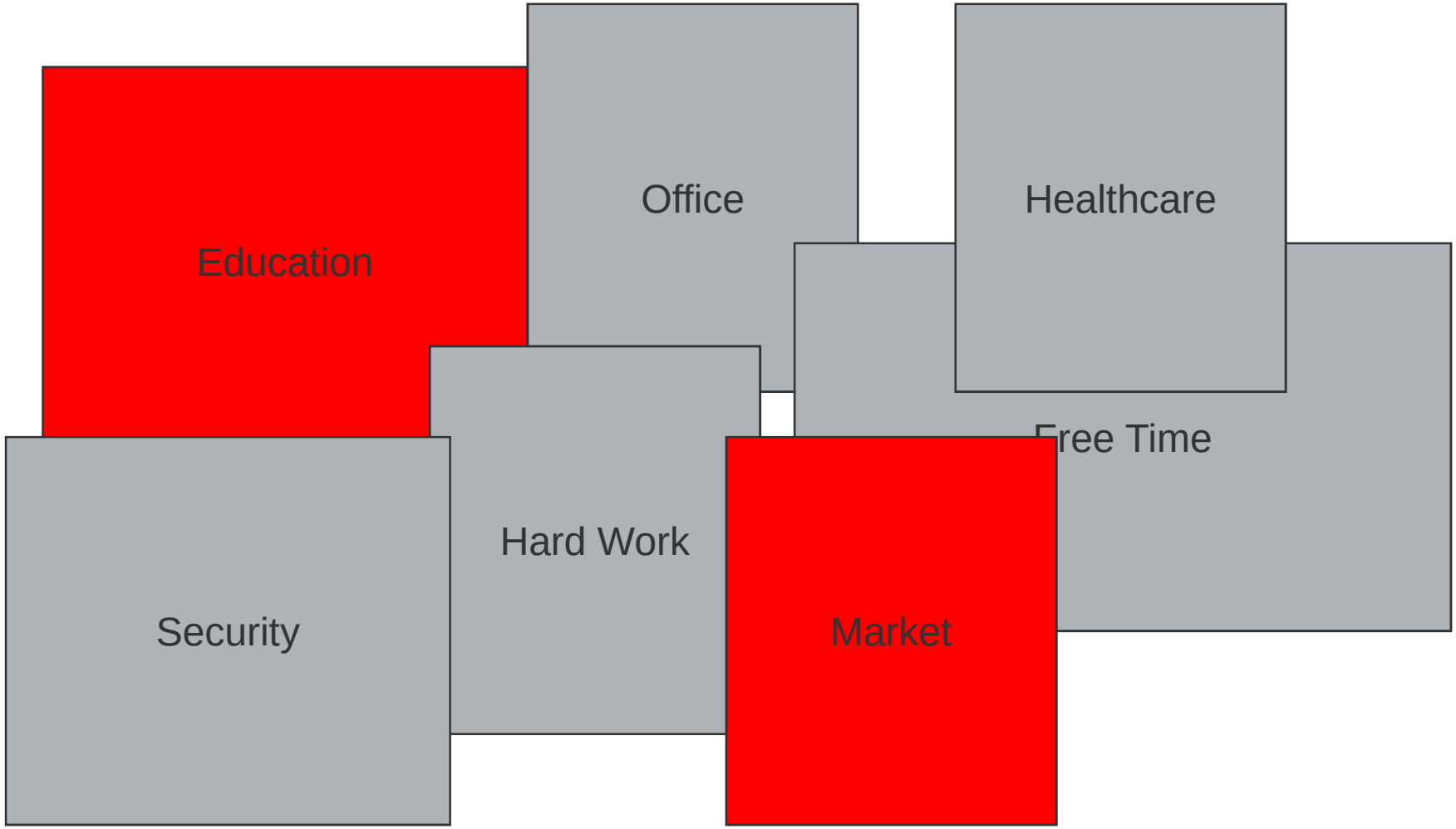

Kinship and Love
Office
Hard Work
Free Time
Divine Grace
Security and Welfare
Political Power

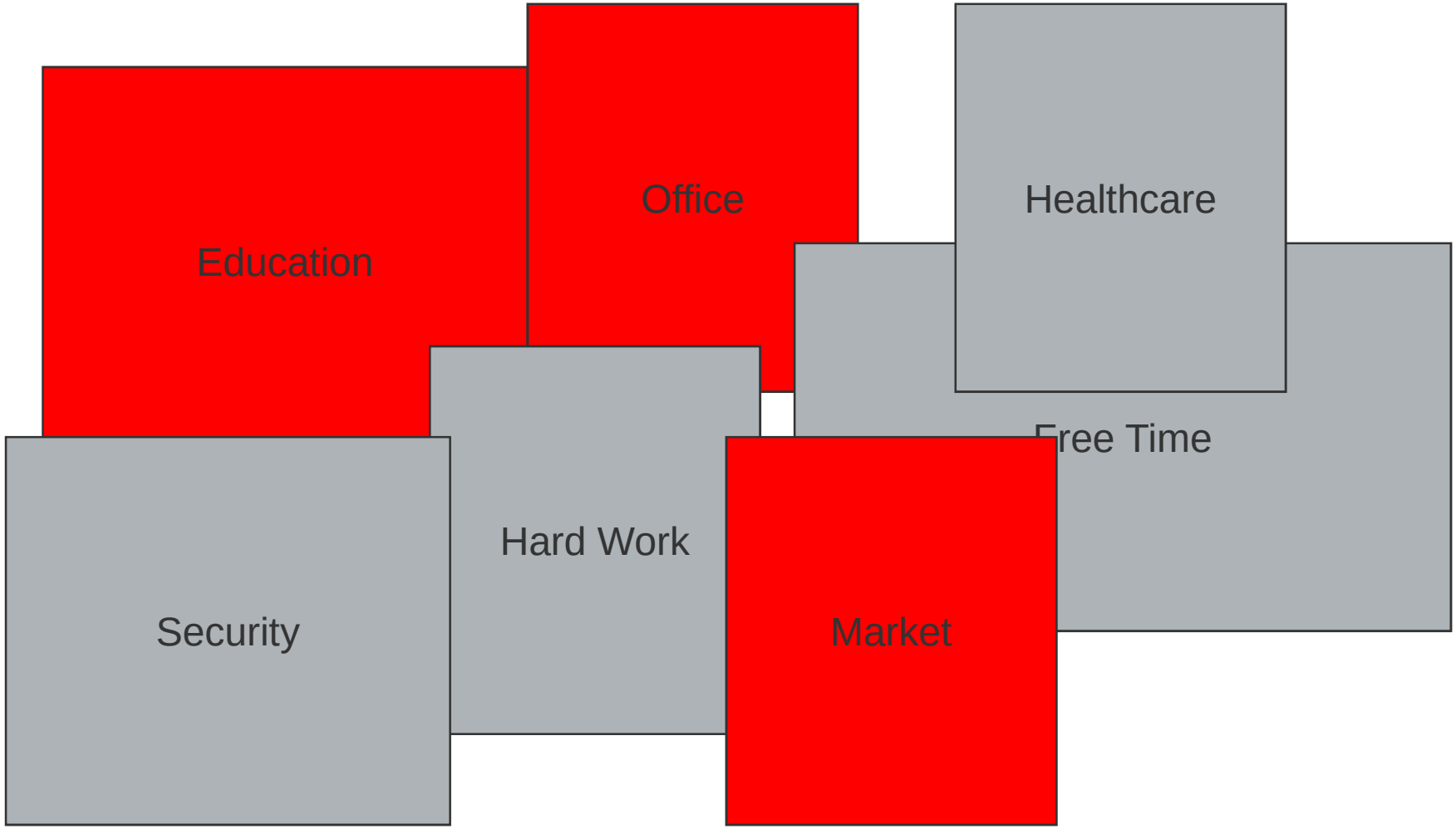

Education
Office
Healthcare
Free Time
Hard Work
Security
Market

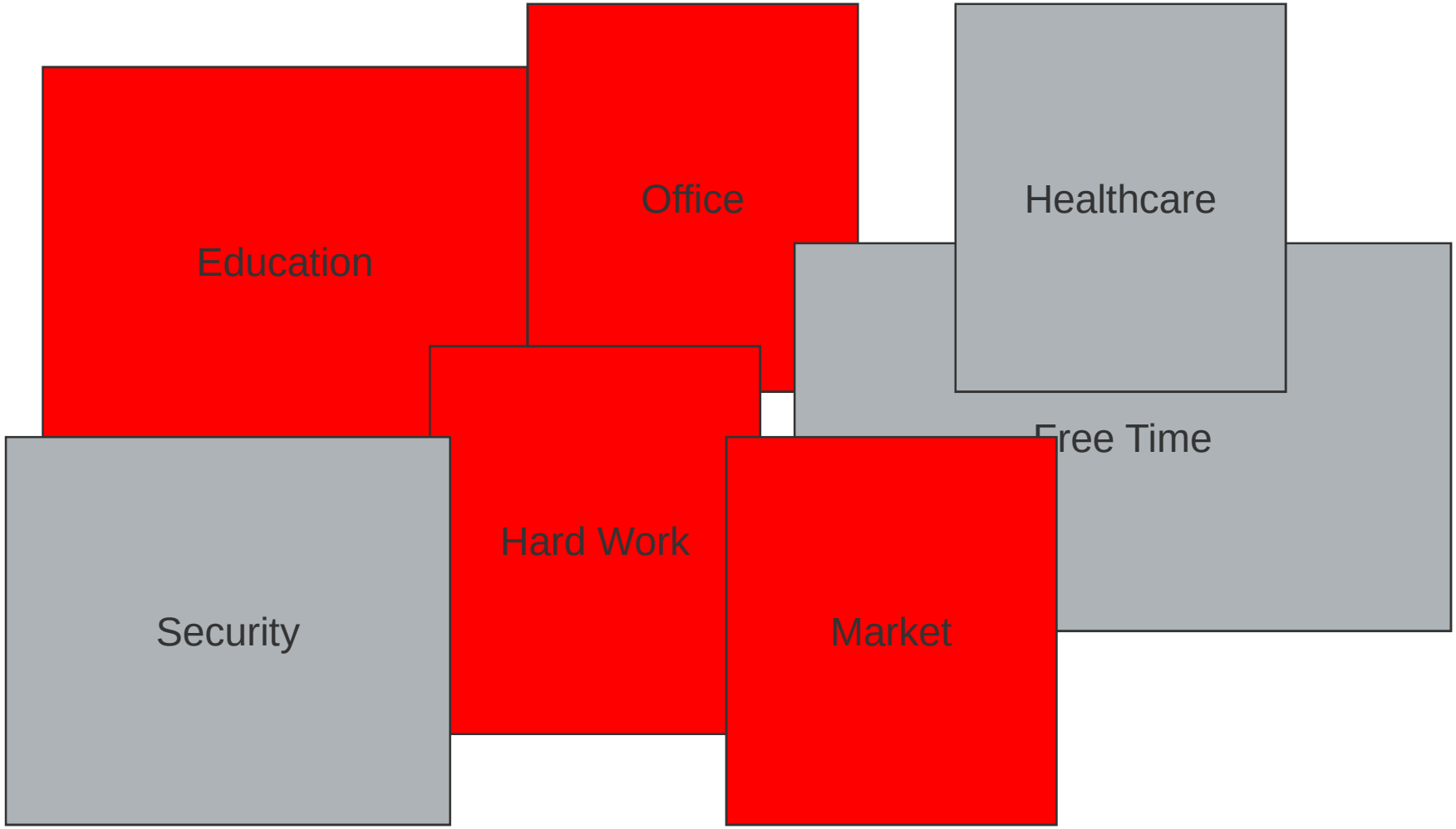

Education
Office
Healthcare
Free Time
Hard Work
Security
Market

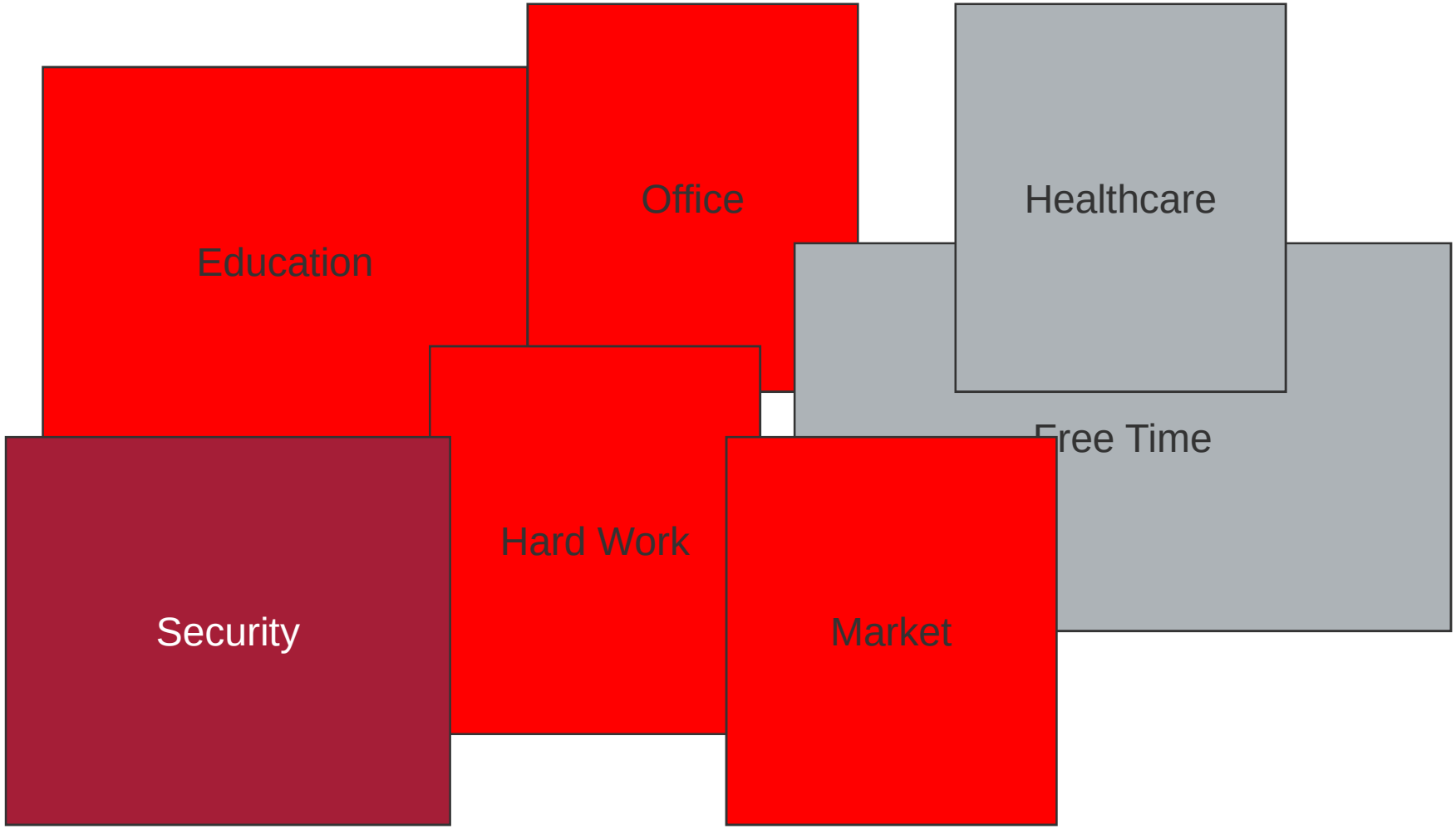

Education
Office
Healthcare
Free Time
Hard Work
Security
Market


Education
Office
Healthcare
Free Time
Hard Work
Security
Market


Education
Office
Healthcare
Free Time
Hard Work
Security
Market


Education
Office
Healthcare
Free Time
Hard Work
Security
Market


Education
Office
Healthcare
Free Time
Hard Work
Security
Market


Education
Office
Healthcare
Free Time
Hard Work
Security
Market

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN

Part Two

REVISITING *SPHERES OF JUSTICE*

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

Basic ideas (I): social goods

„All the goods with which distributive justice is concerned are social goods.“
(Walzer 1983, p. 7)

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

Basic ideas (I): social goods

„Goods don‘t just appear in the hands of distributive agents who do with them as they like or give them out in accordance with some general principle. Rather, goods … come into people‘s minds before they come into their hands; distributions are patterned in accordance with shared conceptions of what the goods are and what they are for.“ (Walzer 1983, p. 6-7)

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

The meaning of „bread“

- „Bread“ as commodity
  - market / free exchange
- „Bread“ as basic food
  - welfare / need
- „Bread“ as „God‘s flesh“
  - religion

Basic ideas (I): social goods

- „Goods“ don‘t have an universal meaning.
- The meaning of a specific good is based on the „shared conceptions“ (Walzer), the way the good is being used and distributed within a given community.

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

Basic ideas (I): social goods

- „Goods“ don‘t have an universal meaning.
- The meaning of a specific good is based on the „shared conceptions“ (Walzer), the way the good is being used and distributed within a given community.

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

Basic ideas (II): complex equality

- Walzer (1994, p. 26) „Distributive justice is relative to social meanings.“
- Walzer (1983, p. 10): „When meanings are distinct, distribution must be autonomous. Every social good or set of goods constitute … a distributive sphere within which only certain criteria and arrangements are approbiate.“

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

Basic ideas (II): complex equality

- Walzer (1983, p. 20): „No social good *x* should be distributed to men and women who possess some other good *y* merely because they posses *y* and without regard to the meaning of *x*.“
- Also: No social good *x* should not be distributed to men and women who don‘t possess some other good *y* merely because they don‘t possess *y* and without regard to the meaning of *x*.
  - „Cumulative disadvantages“
- Walzer (1983, p. 146): „We don‘t rule out men and women with red hair or bad taste in movies or a passion for ice-skating.“

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

Scope and limitations

- Miller (2007, xii): „Walzer‘s liberalism has little to say about rights, an idea that features so prominently in many rival versions.“
- „Spheres of Justice“ as a theory of injustice (Shklar 1992)
- While the idea of autonomous spheres of distribution does provide us with a criteria to recognize injustice, the analysis of the interplay between different spheres is not part of Walzer‘s theory of (in)justice.

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN

Part Three

SECURITY AS A SOCIAL GOOD

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

Distribution according to need

- „Security“ and „welfare“ are to be distributed according to the principle of need: „From each according to his ability (or resources); to each according to his social recognized needs.“ (Walzer 1983, p. 91)
- Distribution based on „social recognized needs“ should not affect the distribution of other social goods.

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

„Security“, „need“, and politics

„We could provide absolute security, eliminate every source of violence except domestic violence, if we put a street light and stationed a policeman every ten yards throughout the city. But that would be very expensive, and so we settle for something less. *How much less can only be decided politically.*“ (Walzer 1983, p. 67)

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

„Security“, „need“, and politics

„We could provide absolute security, eliminate every source of violence except domestic violence, if we put a street light and stationed a policeman every ten yards throughout the city. But that would be very expensive, and so we settle for something less. *How much less can only be decided politically.*“ (Walzer 1983, p. 67)

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

„Security“, „need“, and politics

„We could provide absolute security, eliminate every source of violence except domestic violence, if we put a street light and stationed a policeman every ten yards throughout the city. But that would be very expensive, and so we settle for something less. *How much less can only be decided politically.*“ (Walzer 1983, p. 67)

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

„Security“, „need“, and politics

- Walzer (1983): „Any philosophical effort to stipulate in detail the rights or the entitlement of individuals would radically constrain the scope of democratic decision making.“ (Cf. Walzer 1981)
- Conflict between (inter-)national security regulations and local understanding of the need for security.
  - Walzer (1983): „… security is provided because the citizens need it. And because, at some level, they all need it, the criterion of need remains a critical standard … .“

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

The changing meaning of „security“

- Reminder: The way a social good is being distributed shapes it‘s meaning.
- How does the use of body scanners change the meaning of „security“?
  - What does „security provided by body scanners“ mean to people, that might become visible and potentially marked as, e.g., persons with hidden disabilities?
  - Will they have a word in the political decision making process about the way „security“ is being provided?

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN

Final Part

SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

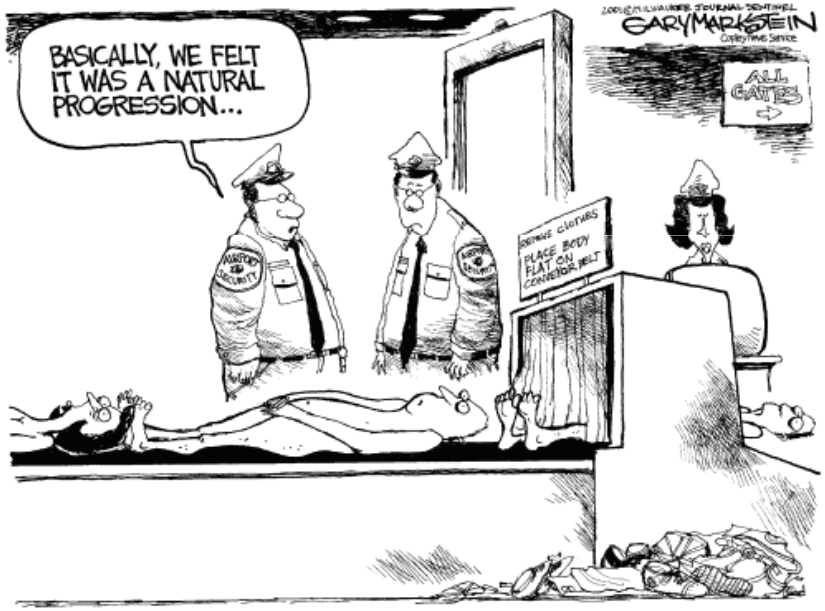
Summary and Outlook

- *Security as social good* is a least a useful metaphor.
  - What is the underlying principle for the distribution of security?
  - What is the meaning of security today?
- But we should be aware of the scope and the limitations of such an approach.
  - Theory of injustice, that says little about the interplay between different spheres.
- Outlook
  - Dirty work: Security personell
  - Punishment: Preventive Detention

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN

Thank you for your attention!



Correspondence address:

Dr. Michael Nagenborg

Wilhelmstr. 19, 72074 Tübingen,
Germany
Fon: +49 7071 29-77516
Fax: +49 7071 29-5255

michael.nagenborg
@izew.uni-tuebingen.de

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

References

- Miller, D. (2007): Introduction. In: M. Walzer: Thinking Politically. New Haven, pp. xii-xxi.
- Minton, A. (2009): Ground control. London - New York.
- Nissenbaum, H. (2009): Privacy in Context. Palo Alto.
- Nissenbaum, H. (2004). Privacy as contextual integrity. Washington Law Review, 79, 119-158.
- Rosa, H. (2006): Kommunitarismus. In: M. Düwell / C. Hübenthal / M. Werner (Eds.): Handbuch Ethik. 2nd Edition. Stuttgart, pp. 218–230.
- Shklar, J. (1992): The Faces of Injustice. New Haven.

© 2012 Universität Tübingen

References

- J. van den Hoven (1999): Privacy or Informational
- Injustice? In: L. J. Pourciau (ed.): *Ethics and Information in the Twenty-First Century*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, pp. 140-150.
- Walzer, M. (1990): The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism. In: *Political Theory,*18 (1), pp. 6–23.
- Walzer, M. (1994): Thick and Thin. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Walzer, M. (1995): Response. In: D. Miller / M. Walzer (eds.): Pluralism, Justice, and Equality. Oxford, pp. 281-297.
- Walzer, M. (1999): Vernunft, Politik und Leidenschaft. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch.

© 2012 Universität Tübingen